

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended) An apparatus for taking up a succession of imbricated packaging bags carried by a pair of carrier tapes, said apparatus comprising:
 - a) two carrier tape winding spools positioned coaxially with one another; and
 - b) a differential gear unit positioned between said spools, said differential gear unit adapted to be, in use, removably connectable to a shaft of a bag loader whereby two carrier tapes can be wound up on said spools with equal tension.
2. (original) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said spools each have a recess in a surface which faces the other spool and wherein said differential gear unit is positioned in said recesses.
3. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein each of said spools is integrally formed with a bevel gear coaxial with said spool.
4. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said differential gear unit comprises a core and at least one ~~satellite~~ pinion gear attached to said core and positioned to mesh with each bevel gear.
5. (original) An apparatus according to claim 4 wherein said core comprises a mating hole for mating with a shaft of a bag loader.
6. (currently amended) An apparatus according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein said spools and differential gear unit are positioned in a cassette housing.

7. (currently amended) An apparatus according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein said differential gear unit is removably connectable to said shaft without the use of tools.

8. – 9. (canceled)

10. (currently amended) A method of loading a bag train on a bag loader, comprising:

- a) ~~taking~~ providing a bag train incorporating a succession of imbricated packaging bags on two supply tapes from which they are to be removed during the loading operation, the supply tapes having lead ends equipped with two tape-winding spools with a differential gear unit ~~is~~ positioned coaxially between the spools;
- b) removably connecting the differential gear unit to a shaft of said bag loader; and
- c) driving said spools to wind up said tapes on said spools with equal tension to bring each of the imbricated bags successively to a loading position where each bag is loaded and separated from the tapes.